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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADS-00 HA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM 07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2687

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E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: CASC, SOCI, SCUL, IS

SUBJECT: EDITORIAL ON ALTERNATIVES FOR BLACK HEBREWS

1. COMMENT: AFTER THE TENDENTIOUS SERIES OF ARTICLES
BY JOAN BORSTEN ON THE BLACK HEBREWS, A MORE CONCILIATORY

- EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE OCTOBER 21

JERUSALEM POST. THE EDITORIAL MAY BE THE RESULT OF AN
INTERVIEW WITH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIAL YUDITH
HUEBNER, WHO HANDLES THE BLACK HEBREW ISSUE. THE POSI-
TIONS STATED SOUND MUCH LIKE SOME OF HER STATEMENTS PRIOR
TO HER LAST MEETING WITH MINISTER BURG CONCERNING THE
BLACK HEBREWS. PRIOR TO RUNNING INTO A BURG/POLICE WHIPSAW
ON THIS ISSUE, HUEBNER WAS COMPARATIVELY MODERATE. ONE
AREA OF DIFFERENCE NOTED IN THE EDITORIAL IS THAT HUEBNER
HAS NEVER GIVEN BEN AMI CARTER HIGH MARKS FOR COOPERATION.

2. ON OCTOBER 20 YEDIOT CARRIED A TERSE FIVE LINER,
"ALTHOUGH SEVERAL MONTHS HAVE GONE BY SINCE THE STATE
COMMITTEE HEADED BY M.K. DAVID GLASS SUBMITTED ITS FINDINGS

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REGARDING THE BLACK HEBREWS, INTERIOR MINISTER BURG HAS NOT
YET SUBMITTED THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CABINET APPROVAL,
NOR HAVE ANY STEPS BEEN TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THE COMMITTEE'S
FINDINGS.

3. TEXT OF OCTOBER 20 JERUSALEM POST EDITORIAL FOLLOWS
UNDER HEADING: "ALTERNATIVES NEEDED FOR BLACK HEBREWS".
ANY OTHER COUNTRY WOULD MOST PROBABLY HAVE SENT THEM LONG
AGO BACK WHERE THEY CAME FROM - AS DID LIBERIA, SHORTLY
AFTER THE BLACK HEBREWS, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF SELF-
PROCLAIMED MESSIAH BEN-AMI CARTER LANDED ON ITS TERRITORY,
SEEKING REFUGE FROM ALLEGED PERSECUTION IN THE BLACK GHETTO
OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

ISRAEL, NOT BEING A BLACK COUNTRY, HAS NOT FOLLOWED THE
LIBERIAN EXAMPLE, AND TODAY IT IS FACING A PROBLEM THE
DIMENSIONS OF WHICH WERE INDICATED IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES
IN THIS NEWSPAPER LAST WEEK.

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REVIEWED BY CL DATE 8/12/81

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BY MARCH 1970, WHEN THE SECOND GROUP OF BLACK HEBREWS ARRIVED IN THIS COUNTRY, THE AUTHORITIES KNEW VERY WELL THAT THESE SUPPOSED DESCENDANTS OF ISRAELITE EXILES WERE NEITHER CONVERTED JEWS NOR STATELESS REFUGEES, AND THAT THEY DID NOT IN ANY WAY QUALIFY UNDER THE LAW OF RETURN. FROM STATEMENTS BY BEN-AMI CARTER HIMSELF THE AUTHORITIES (MEANING, IN EFFECT, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY) WERE ALSO WELL AWARE THAT THE GROUP WAS INDOCTRINATED IN A CULTIC FAITH THAT WAS NOT ONLY ANTI-WHITE BUT ANTI-SEMITIC AND ANTI-ISRAEL AS WELL.

TODAY, CENTERED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN THE NEGEV TOWNS OF
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DIMONA, ARAD AND MITZPE RAMON, THE BLACK HEBREWS, GROWN TO AN ADMITTED 2,000 AND POSSIBLY TWICE AS MANY, STILL FORM A CLOSED NATION WITHIN A NATION. THEIR BELIEFS ARE UNCHANGED, AND WHILE THEY ARE NOT GIVEN TO CRIME, THEIR WILLINGNESS TO COMPLY WITH THE COUNTRY'S LAWS IS NOT TOO CONSPICUOUS WHENEVER THOSE LAWS TEND TO CONSTRICT THEIR STYLE OF LIVING AND THEIR NUMERICAL GROWTH.

THE INTERIOR MINISTRY DID NOT DEPORT THEM BACK A DECADE AGO FOR THE SOLE REASON THAT THEIR SKIN WAS BLACK, AND FOR FEAR THAT THEIR EXPULSION MIGHT STIR UP CHARGES OF RACISM AGAINST ISRAEL. HAD THEY BEEN WHITE, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO COMPUNCTION ABOUT BANISHING SUCH AN UPSTART CROWD OF BOGUS - AND EXCLUSIVE - CLAIMANTS TO THIS LAND. AS IT WAS, THEY WERE ALLOWED TO STAY ON, SOMEWHERE IN THE TWILIGHT ZONE OF LEGALITY.

A CONCENTRATED EFFORT WAS, HOWEVER, LAUNCHED TO PREVENT THE BLACK HEBREWS FROM SWELLING THEIR RANKS THROUGH UNLAWFUL IMMIGRATION. THE EFFORT HAS BEEN A DISMAL FAILURE. MANY INNOCENT BLACK AMERICAN TOURISTS HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO HARASSMENT BY AIRPORT OFFICIALS SUSPECTING THEY ARE RECRUITS TO THE CULT, BUT THE CARTER PEOPLE HAVE KEPT GETTING HUNDREDS OF THEIR FELLOW CULTISTS FROM THE U.S. IN A VARIETY OF DEVIOUS WAYS.

CLEARLY, WHOLESALDE DEPORTATION IS NOT A VIABLE OPTION TODAY. THE ONLY CIVILIZED ALTERNATIVE, THEN, IS FOR THE STATE TO PUT THE BLACK HEBREWS UP AS LEGALLY PERMANENT RESIDENTS IN A SETTLEMENT OF THEIR OWN WHERE THEY COULD LEAD A LIFE CONSONANT WITH THEIR BELIEFS - BUT IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW OF THE LAND.

THAT IS WHAT A PANEL HEADED BY MK DAVID GLASS, CHAIRMAN OF
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THE KNESSET LAW COMMITTEE, RECOMMENDED LAST JUNE AFTER AN EXHAUSTIVE PROBE. THIS MAY NOT BE AN IDEAL SOLUTION, AND SOME CLOSE OBSERVERS BELIEVE MR. GLASS WAS IN SOME MEASURE TAKEN IN BY MR. CARTER'S CLEVER SHOW OF MODERATION. BUT THE IDEA (WHICH INTERIOR MINISTER BURG IS FOR SOME REASON STILL KEEPING ON HIS SHELF) IS CONGENIAL TO THE BLACK HEBREWS' JEWISH NEIGHBORS, AND PRESUMABLY TO THE KNESSET, TOO.

MR. CARTER FOR HIS PART IS WILLING TO COOPERATE - PROVIDED THE GOVERNMENT FIRST UNDERTAKES TO SET UP, AT ITS OWN EXPENSE, THE SUGGESTED MOSHAV FOR HIS FOLLOWERS. THAT IS, HOWEVER, THE WRONG SEQUENCE. MR. CARTER MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO DICTATE TERMS TO THE GOVERNMENT. HE MUST HIMSELF FIRST PROVIDE A FULL LIST OF NAMES OF FOLLOWERS, THEIR TRUE NAMES AND THEIR FINGERPRINTS, AND HE MUST UNDERTAKE TO STOP BRINGING IN ANY NEW MEMBERS IF HE WANTS A SOLUTION - NOT IF HE GETS ONE.

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ANY SHOW OF READINESS TO TREAT THE BLACK HEBREWS AS A SOVEREIGN ENTITY WILL ONLY ENCOURAGE THEIR TENDENCY TO BEHAVE LIKE ONE.

HAVING ALLOWED THEM TO STAY ON IN ISRAEL SO LONG, THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT PLEAD UNCONCERN ABOUT THE FATE OF THE BLACK HEBREWS. BY THE SAME TOKEN, HOWEVER, IT ALSO HAS AN OBLIGATION TO THE HUNDREDS OF REPORTED MEMBERS OF THE CULT WHO WISH TO DEFECT - BUT ARE DETERRED BY FEAR THAT THIS MIGHT MEAN BEING THROWN OUT INTO THE STREET, OR OUT OF THE COUNTRY. TO THEM IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE STATE WOULD WELCOME SUCH A STEP - AND WOULD MAKE IT ENTIRELY POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY AS ORDINARY BLACK ISRAELIS, IF THEY SO DESIRED. END TEXT. LEWIS

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